

The New Amberola GRAPHIC

*Winter
Number*

Deadline for
next issue:
April 1

75

January, 1991

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January, 1991
(Winter)

The New Amberola Graphic

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Revised Notice

Advertisers who wish to prepare dated auction lists, etc., should keep in mind that delivery of the GRAPHIC sometimes takes upwards of three weeks to reach some parts of the country and Canada. We advise closing dates of no sooner than May 31, August 31, November 30 and February 28 for dated matter.

Editor's Notes

We pass a minor milestone this month as we publish the 75th issue of the GRAPHIC! Of course, this would not be possible without the assistance of our contributors, advertisers, and especially our readers -- all of whom have remained faithful over the years as we've experienced the ups and downs of putting this quarterly out.

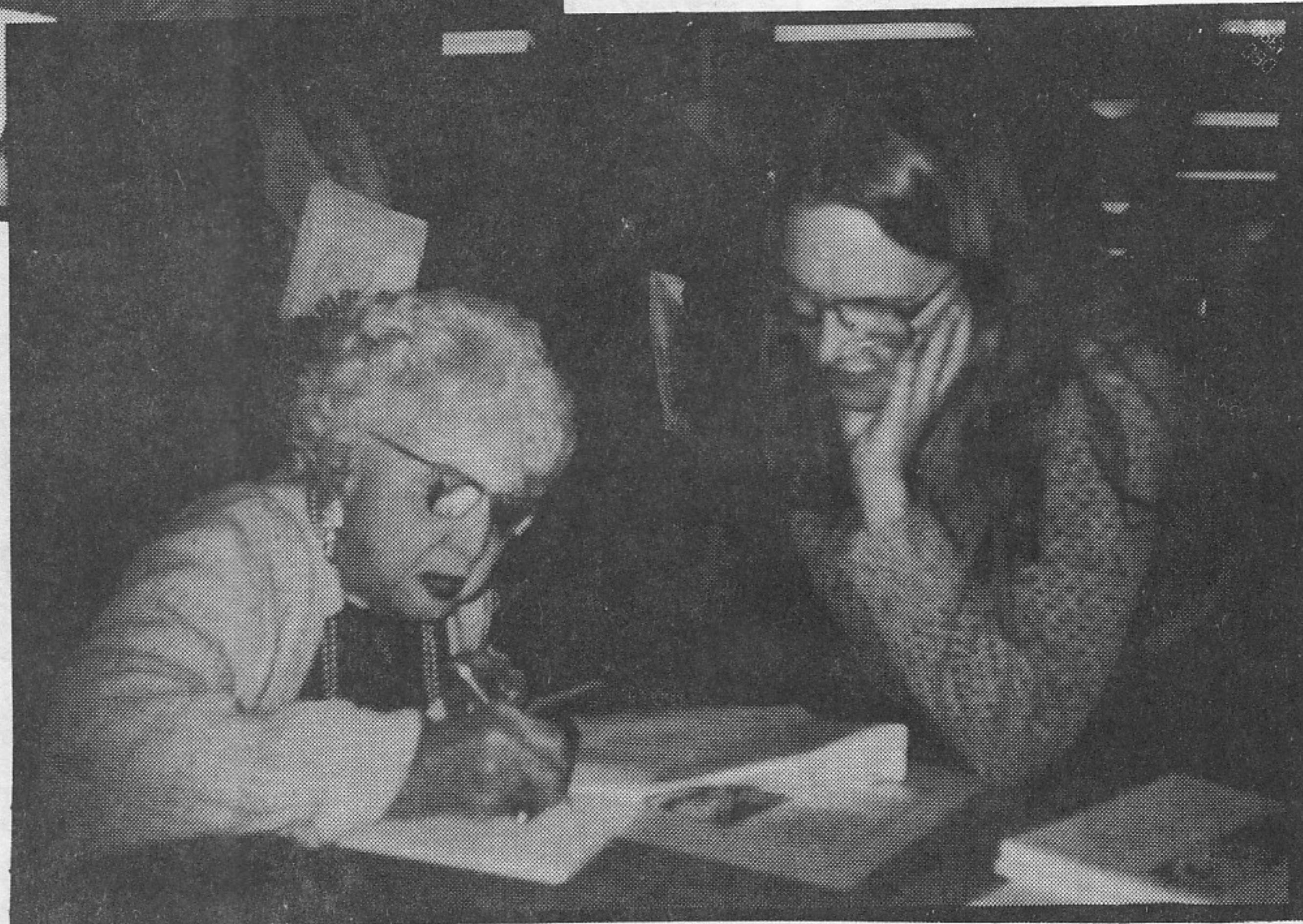
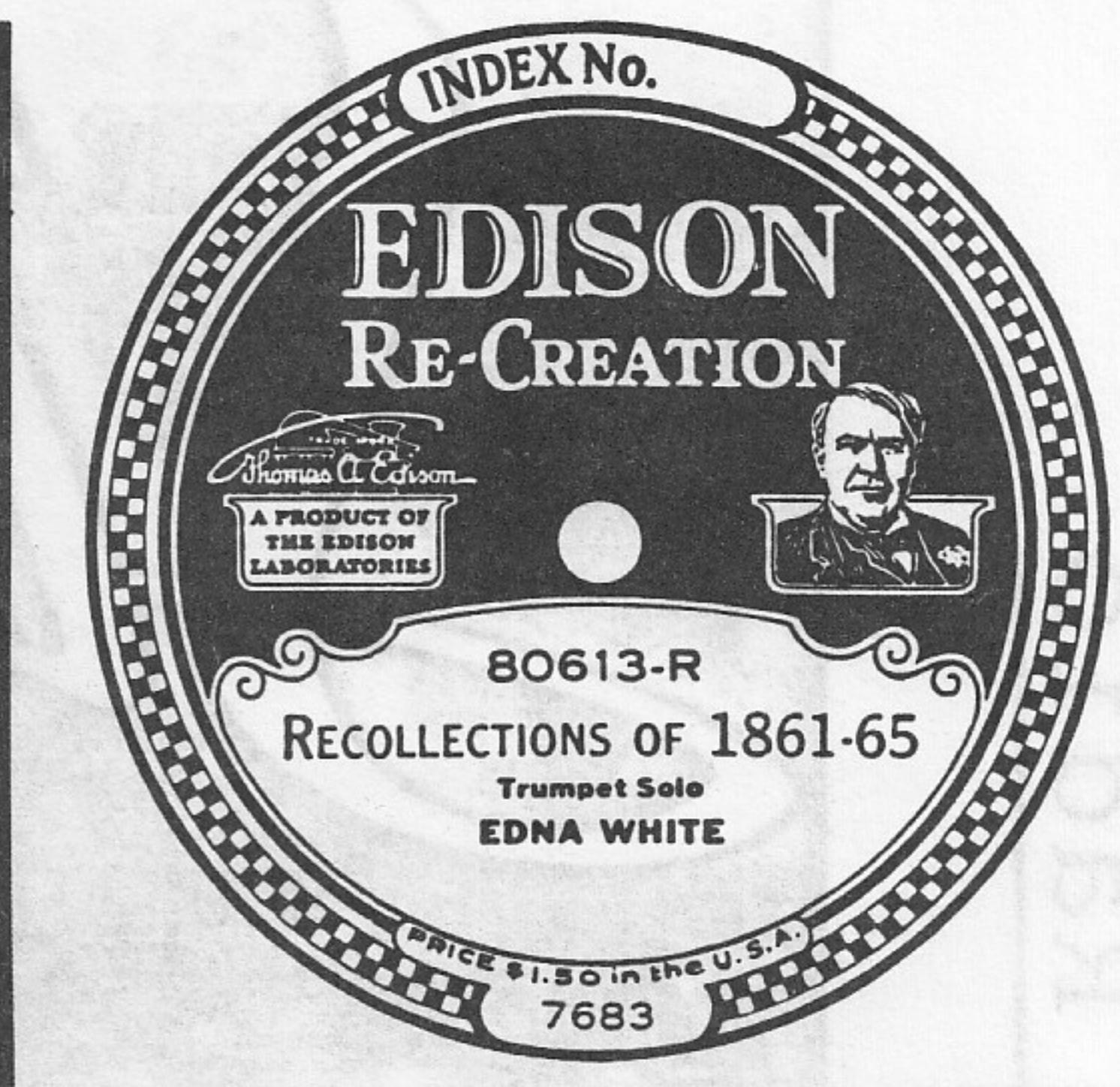
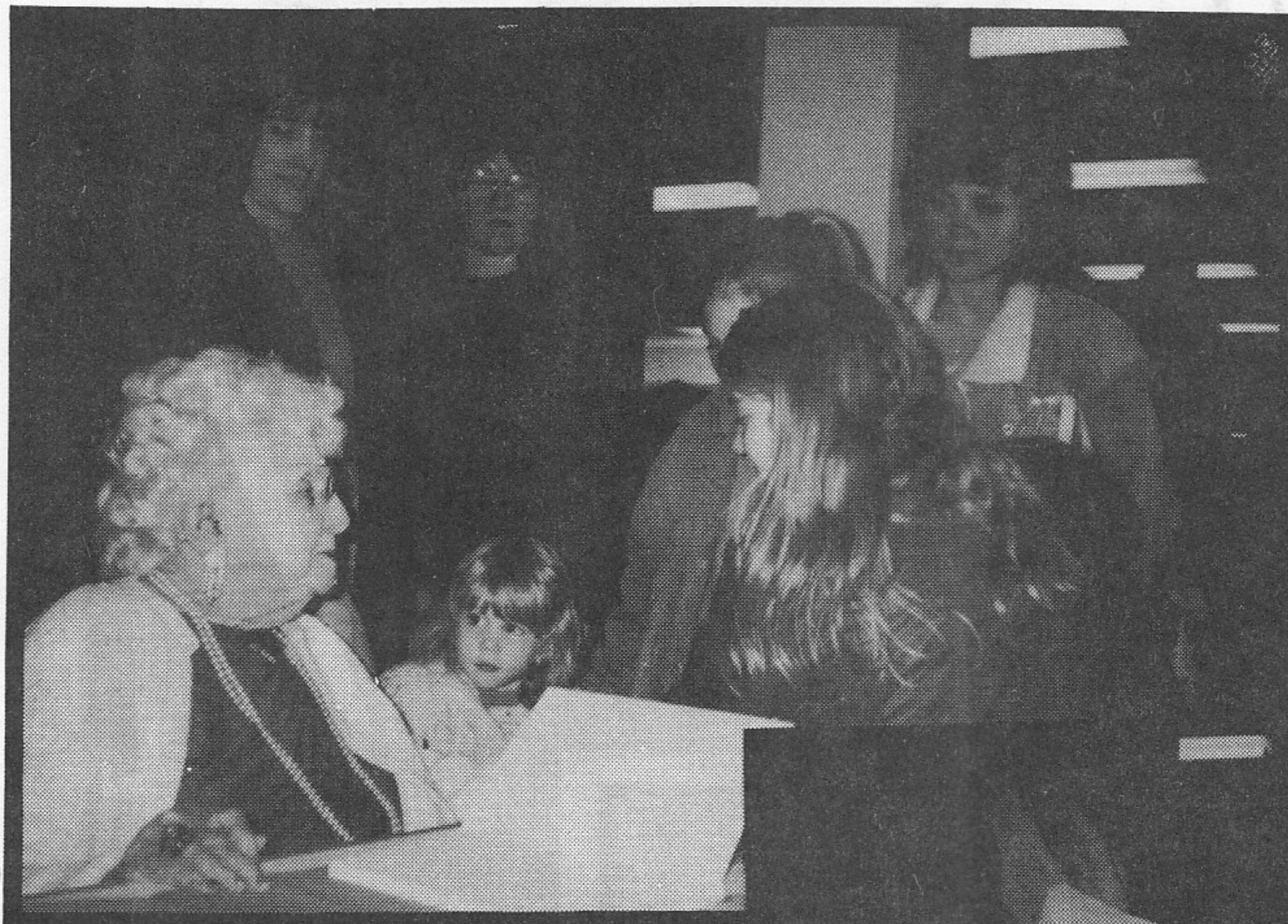
At this writing, the postal rates are due to increase in just over a week... and yet, the Postal Service still can't tell us what the various rates will be, other than the cost of a one ounce first class letter. This is especially frustrating for businesses who rely on the mails and need to know rate increases more than just a few days in advance. In spite of their wanting to be thought of as a quasi-private operation, the Postal Service still operates with the arrogance of a government bureaucracy!

Speaking of postage increases, one of the claims of the previous administration was that they got inflation under control...and yet a first class letter cost just 15¢ when Reagan took office in 1981!

- M.F.B.

3.

Book SIGNING for EDISON ARTIST!



At 98, Edna White Chandler doesn't get out as much as she used to. However, she made an exception when she accepted an invitation from Wilson's Department Store for a book-signing reception in her honor at their downtown store in Greenfield, Massachusetts. During the afternoon of Saturday, December 1st, she signed several copies of her new book The Night the Camel Sang for old and new friends. Edna White's Edison career goes back further than perhaps any other person now living.

Yes, there was life after the Victrola for some pioneer recording artists, many of whom saw their commercial recording careers go up in smoke by 1930. Henry Burr went on to a decade of broadcasting, largely over station W.L.S. in Chicago. Two articles about Burr were sent to us by Allen Debus and Mike Biel. While the first dates from August 10, 1936, and the second is some six years later at the time of Burr's death, there are similarities between the two to suggest they were both by the same writer. Allen remarks that Burr was not only on the National Barn Dance program on Saturdays in 1935, but he also had his own 15 minute program three times a week called "Henry Burr's Book of Ballads." Readers who are surprised by the claim that Burr sold 3.3 million copies of "Good Night, Little Girl, Good Night" may recall that this song was on the back of the 25¢ demo record sold in the Teens by Columbia!

Stand By!

PRAIRIE FARMER'S RADIO WEEKLY

Man on the Cover

THE name of Henry Burr has been a household word for more than a score of years. The number of persons who knew and loved his voice years before the advent of radio cannot, of course, be estimated, but it literally staggers the imagination.

Beginning in the very earliest days of phonograph recordings, Henry has made probably more records than any other individual singer on earth. He doesn't know exactly how many



Listen, Henry, you can't fool us. We know those ducks are just decoys.

have been sold, but one of them, "Good Night, Little Girl, Good Night," alone sold over 3,300,000 records.

With such a tremendous sale for only one record, it is not surprising that Henry was for 20 years among the five best sellers in the world. From the days of the old cylinder records, Henry has recorded for all the major companies.

During the World War, Henry's beautiful recording of "Just a Baby's Prayer at Twilight" swept America. Other recording successes such as "Good Night, Little Girl, Good Night," "Always," "Remember" and "Wonderful One" are familiar to almost every American.

Henry's records are credited with the greatest sale in history.

Henry was born in the little town of St. Stevens, New Brunswick, and it was not long after this important event in his life that he was singing. He was born with the desire for song and the gift to touch people's hearts.

As a boy he sang soprano in many churches in Canada. His first concert, though, was when he was the mascot of the St. John, New Brunswick, Bicycle and Athletic Club Minstrel Show. Henry's stellar solo was the old song, "Her Eyes Don't Shine Like Diamonds."

Off to Manhattan

After attending Mt. Allison Academy at Sackville, New Brunswick, Henry went to New York to study voice. This was in 1902 after his voice had changed to tenor. His first church position in New York was at

Grace M. E. Church, which was followed by 10 years as soloist at the Church of the Incarnation, one of the large Episcopal churches. He also appeared in concert and oratorio work.

At the end of his first year in New York, Henry made a connection with the Columbia Phonograph Company and started making records for them. This he did for many years, recording also for the Edison Company, and in fact, for all recording companies of that time.

Before 1920, Henry was an artist for all the leading companies—Victor, Columbia, Edison, Pathé and Aeolian. Between 1920 and 1928, as an exclusive Victor artist, Henry was their outstanding individual performer in his line.

Those who have grown to love Henry's songs are not surprised to learn that he was among the first five best sellers for over 20 years. They might, rather, be surprised if he had not been.

Coast to Coast

During a period of 15 years Henry appeared in concert from coast to coast throughout the United States and Canada. He owned, managed and appeared in the concert group "Eight Popular Victor Artists." They were featured in large theatres of scores of cities.

An early acquaintanceship with Alexander Graham Bell, genius of the telephone, led to one of the most interesting experiences of Henry's career. He was chosen to sing over the first transcontinental telephone hook-up in history. In an early issue we shall bring you the story of this event which went down in history. As a matter of fact, Henry sang both from east to west and back again—but that's another story.

Radio Experience

Feeling there was a place and a need for greater showmanship in radio, Henry formed "Henry Burr, Inc." in 1928. This organization produced many of the big commercial network programs of the time. They included the first Buick, Cadillac, Stromberg-Carlson, Libby, McNeil and Maxwell House. Henry also originated the Cities Service program and produced it for over two years. Today, with minor changes, it still follows the basic structure Henry outlined.

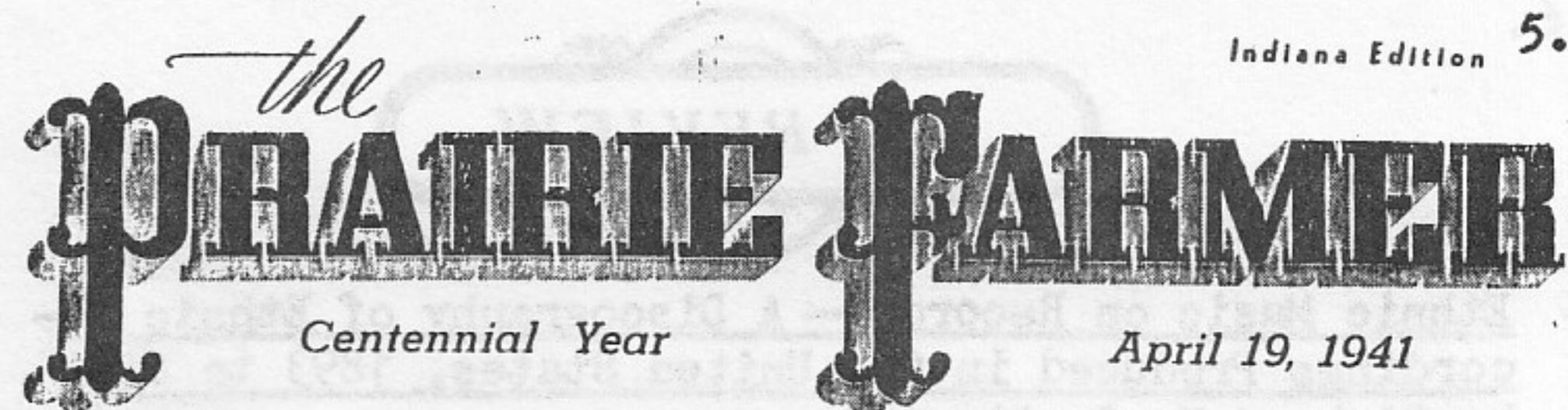
In 1930 Henry became head of CBS's Columbia Artists Bureau where his thorough knowledge of showmanship proved invaluable.

In joining the staff of WLS, Henry feels that he is singing to old friends. During years of concert work he appeared in scores of cities and towns in the WLS listening area. The welcome which the station's audience has accorded Henry is proof of the warmth of that friendship.

Henry is of medium height, has blue eyes, silvery white hair and one of the finest smiles you'll ever encounter. His years of experience have added to his natural kindness and he is ever ready to help or encourage a younger artist.

Henry is married to the former Cecilia Niles. Many listeners will recall the anniversary program which was broadcast in honor of the Burr silver wedding day, June 6, 1935.

• • •



Centennial Year

April 19, 1941

Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright 1941 by The Prairie Farmer Publishing Co.

Henry Burr—All to His Work and His Work to All

WHEN Henry Burr, the Dean of Ballad Singers, passed away Sunday, April 6, the nation lost a great artist, and we here at WLS lost a true friend.

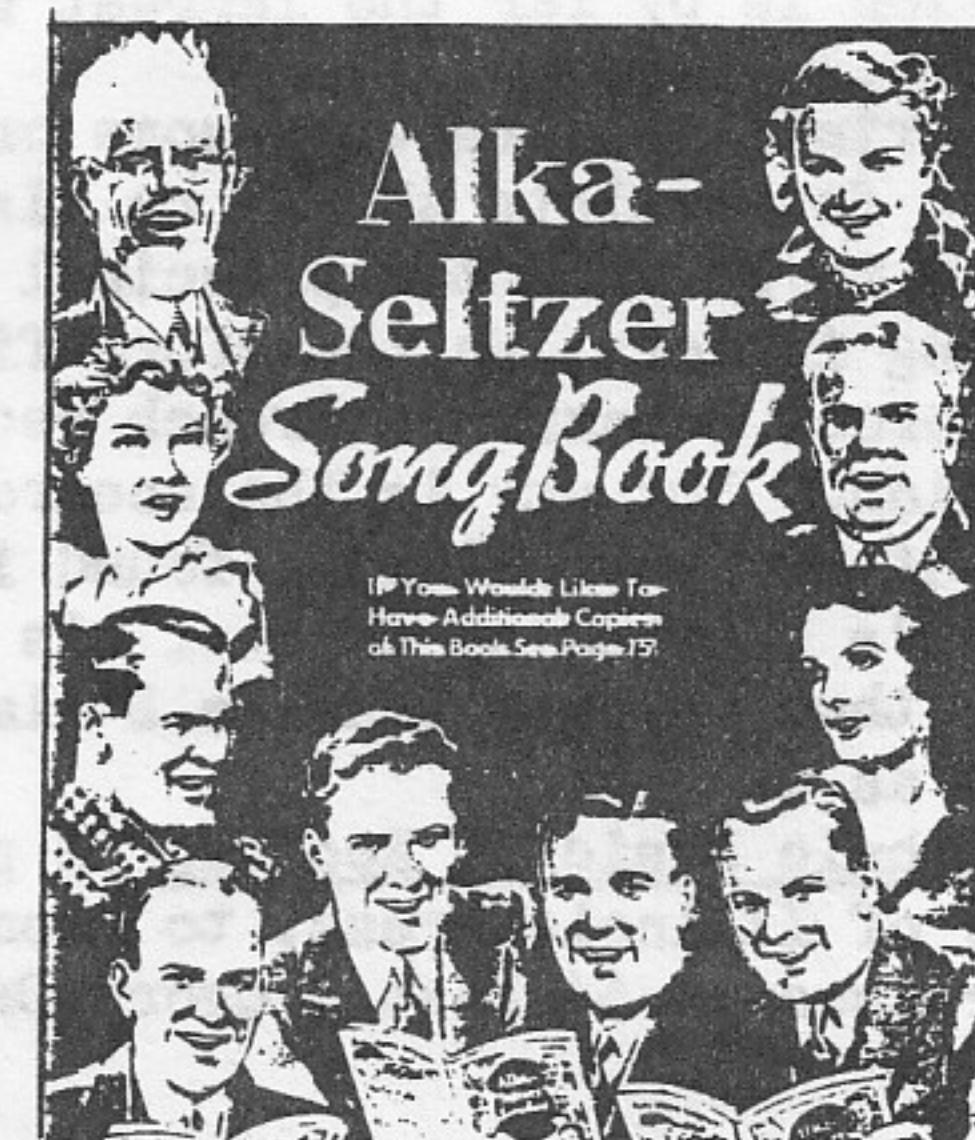
Thousands of people throughout the nation considered him a friend, too, and the question most often asked in his heavy fan mail was: "Are you the same Henry Burr we used to hear on our phonograph?"

More of Henry Burr's phonograph records have been sold than those of any other artist. One alone, his version of "Good Night, Little Girl, Good Night," sold more than 3,300,000 copies. For 20 years Henry Burr was among the five best-selling recording artists. During World War years, Henry's recording of "Just a Baby's Prayer at Twilight" swept America. His singing of "Always," "Remember" and "Wonderful One" are familiar to almost everyone who had a phonograph in those days.

Henry's real name was Harry McClaskey. He was born in St. Stephen, New Brunswick, Canada, in 1885. He was singing in public by the time he was five years old. At 13, he was soloist with a military band at St. John, New Brunswick. A year later, his father offered him a gold watch if he would quit singing for two years. So Henry quit; he got not only the watch, but his father also arranged for him to study in New York City under John D. Meehan.



At right, Burr is on the cover of the 1937 "Alka-Seltzer Song Book." He is also pictured on the first page of songs.



IN REVIEW

Ethnic Music on Records -- A Discography of Ethnic Recordings Produced in the United States, 1893 to 1942
by Richard K. Spottswood

Without a doubt, this is the most important and ambitious single work to come along since the Brian Rust discographies. It is truly encyclopedic in scope!

Recording for the various ethnic groups, many of whom were recent arrivals to our shores, was begun by both major and minor companies soon after their establishment. While some ethnic recording was done as early as the 1890s, it reached its heyday in the late Teens and 1920s, as evidenced by the thousands of green label Columbias which continue to turn up. This, then, is a directory to those recordings made in the U.S. by and for ethnic populations. (Note, therefore, that none of the imported masters issued by the various companies are included.)

This work is the result of several years of research and study on Mr. Spottswood's part. The set of seven volumes (nearly 4500 pages) gives us an extensive introduction, followed by records listed by artists under their primary language. These languages are divided into logical groups, volume by volume, so that Western European languages are in one volume, Slavic tongues in another, and so forth. Because the work was produced with the aid of a state-of-the-art computer, it was fairly easy to generate a complete title index (652 pages), artist index (another 100 pages), in addition to complete record number and matrix number indeces.

For the collector, the work's primary usefulness will be in further identifying the records contained in his collection. But it also serves as an enormous reference source for "what's out there" -- a huge shopping list of records to look for. The collector of Irish fiddle music, for example, will find more records listed than he probably knew existed. The classical vocal collector will make discoveries in the ethnic lists by artists such as Karl Jörn, Otto Goritz, Francesco Daddi, Maria Kurenko, etc. The collector of American popular songs may take pleasure in discovering four ethnic versions of "Yes! We Have No Bananas" or nine of "The Prisoner's Song"!

There are constant discoveries to be made among its pages. For example, Cal Stewart seems to have had a rival in the form of Elzéar Hamel, whose *Ladébauche* stories were enormously popular with French Canadians. There is "Ladébauche at the Telephone," "Ladébauche in New York," "Ladébauche at the Doctor's," and dozens of other tales to tickle the funnybones of those who can understand them. Military band collectors will have a field day. And who wouldn't want to hear Julian Mario Oliver sing "Viva Tonal"? Or hear Enrique Madriguera and His Magic Notes play dance tunes on green label Columbia Viva-tonal records? (By the way, the Spanish section is by far the largest single language represented.)

Certainly there were some problems in determining how a few artists should be listed. Spottswood decided to go with the principal language as the determining factor. We therefore find, for example, all of Torcom Bezazian's French recordings in the Armenian section. But why is the accordionist John Kimmel, who was of German heritage, found in the Irish section? If it's because so much of his work was of Irish music, then perhaps Charles D'Almaine should be included here as well.

Ethnic Music on Records is published by the University of Illinois Press, to whom inquiries should be addressed at 54 East Gregory Drive, Champaign, IL 61820.

Columbia Records "A Series" by Claude Seary

Columbia collectors HO!!! I would like to make my fellow collectors aware of a great new publication now being produced. Claude Seary (whose advertisement can be found elsewhere in this issue) is producing a numerical listing of the Columbia A series records. Each is listed numerically, with song title, artist(s) and matrix numbers where available. He has already issued two updates to add to the previously released Volume 1, A1 - A695. Volume two has just been received, and I have already begun to revel in its information.

To my knowledge, this is the first listing of this series of records to be released other than the original catalogs which are HARD to find. This has greatly aided my identification of the "cut outs" of the 78 RPM industry. Standards, Diamonds, Harmonies, United, and Aretinos all came from Columbia stock and usually have the exact same record number. Only 2 out of 50 odd records checked so far had numbers that don't match. I am now able to catalog the records properly, with the correct artists and matrix numbers.

I am looking forward to Volume 3. (review from Dave Hanser, Ft. Lauderdale, FL)

Billy Murray Musical Biography by John Doulou

How would you like to spend a day with that great pioneer recording artist, Billy Murray? Well now you can, thanks to collector John Doulou. Actually it's more than a day; it's 32 hours worth!

Mr. Doulou, who has mounted a campaign to make Billy Murray ("the man who made the most money for the Victor Talking Machine Company") a household word, has recorded Murray's biography on 32 one-hour cassettes. The series is available in groups of four volumes. Billy Murray's recordings spanned the period from 1897 to 1943. Peter Dawson's autobiography was called Fifty Years of Song; had Billy written his, it might be titled Forty-Six Years of Entertainment.

This review is based on a sample of four of the cassettes, but since they are consistent, the others should be of similar quality. The tapes are recorded in chronological order by year. In some cases a tape may include multiple years. While the recordings on a particular tape are for that year, they are not played in the order they were recorded. This gives a better musical flow to the series.

According to Mr. Doulou, Billy Murray made over 6,000 recordings. As with other artists, he recorded the same song for many labels and was also a member of quartets. Mr. Doulou has tried to select the recordings most associated with Murray and, more importantly, the rarer recordings. This is particularly evident in the earlier and later volumes. A large number of the Murray & Scanlan recordings are included, as well as some early brown wax cylinders. One of my favorites is Volume 30, coincidentally the records of 1930. This tape starts with a rare disc advertising Westinghouse Radios for RCA! Most of the tape is Murray & Scanlan. Other tapes include interviews with Jim Walsh (from Merritt Malvern's excellent series from the 1970's), and Murray's appearance on National Barn Dance in 1942.

The recordings in this series were contributed by many collectors, and Mr. Doulou has dedicated each volume to a different person. Volume 32 is dedicated to "future Billy Murray collectors." At the end of each tape the sources of the recordings are given. It would be helpful if each cassette would have a printed contents list to locate a specific recording; a simple Xerox might do. More importantly, I'd suggest that an index of the full series be included for persons purchasing the full set.

Between the recordings, producer Doulou presents

(cont. p. 9, bottom left)

Vintage Vignettes

by David Milefsky

"Sad News and Glad Tidings"

Vignette No. 15 is for those who appreciated and would appreciate the work of a tireless sage who brought light and life to the many long-gone "pioneers" who made out cherished records.

A few years ago when Allen and Bruni Debus were visiting with us here in Boyce, he suggested that I write an article on Jim Walsh. Certainly I was both flattered and stunned, as I had given no previous thought to the matter. Well, Allen, here it is.

As is customary for a courier delivering news of both good and bad points, he usually begins with the bad so that the good might be more than a mere "buffer" for the recipient. In keeping with this tradition, I shall substitute the words "sad" and "glad."

First, the sad news. On a post card dated Dec. 30, 1990, which I received on the morning of Jan. 3, 1991, was typed the following...

Dear Dave:

I have just learned that Jim Walsh passed away on December 24 at the age of 80. Someone on the staff of the nursing home where he lived wrote me that his physical condition has been deteriorating steadily for several months, but he was very alert until the last couple of days.

At last, I have copied the two photos of Walter Van Brunt. I should get the prints back in a few days. Hope they will be o.k.

Regards,
Quentin

Of course the "glad tidings" are found in the second paragraph of our friend Quentin Riggs' card, so hopefully I will be able to illustrate my continuing sketch of Van Brunt. I wish now, however, to devote the remainder of this space to Jim Walsh.

For better or worse, I would not, most likely, have begun writing had it not been for this most interesting and talented individual.

On a dreary afternoon shortly before Christmas in 1959, my dad dropped me off at the local library so that I could research a school project. On my way to the "stacks" I noticed an attractive display of current magazines, and there beheld my initial exposure to Hobbies. Browsing through its pages I discovered a section entitled "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists." Oh, boy! The rest of my time there was spent shuffling through piles of back issues of my newly-found item, with hopes that my grade for the school-work would warrant at least a "gentleman's 'C'!"

In the years that followed I have been fortunate to have read the majority of Jim's work in that magazine and develop friendships with fellow enthusiasts whose names he mentioned from time to time. Perhaps this willingness to share in a respectful and convivial manner is what struck me most about his journalistic approach, his ardent research being a more-than-welcome "bonus."

Born in Richmond, Virginia, christened Ulysses Walsh, he once told me that he never cared for his first name and was glad to have been given the nick-

name of "Jim" by his co-workers in the news copy department of the Johnson City, Tennessee paper (he was a newspaper man most of his life). As it turned out, his parents admired Civil War General Ulysses S. Grant (darned if I didn't attend junior high school with Grant's great-Grandson, Bill)!



Jim Walsh with Rosalynd David-Kaplan on the grounds of Glenmont, Thomas Edison's home in West Orange, in the late 1970s. Miss Davis, a violinist, made two sides for Edison as well as others with the Dann Trio.

As for Jim's sense of humor, it was rather "English" of the wry and dry mode. An example of it is that he said several weeks after he was born, some Confederate sympathizers learned his name was Ulysses and they proceeded to tar, feather and rail him out of town so that he and his parents were forced to take refuge at the family home in Durham, N.C. Their one consolation of that particular excursion was knowledge of the fact that he was the only white baby born in Richmond name Ulysses!

Speaking about times past, Jim was most sensitive about his age. When once he learned that someone quite dear to him had tried to discover the year of his birth, he all but had a fit! However, temper quickly vanished in his glee that the old courthouse, which contained that information, had burned!

Again referring to Jim's tireless efforts to tell the stories of American recording artists, I feel not in the least badly about relating another "on" him. Once, a mutual friend of Jim's and mine was visiting with him in the early '60s and just happened to see an open-faced letter, upon a table, that Jim had written to the soprano Elizabeth Wheeler. In it, Jim said that she and he shared the same birthdays thirty-five years apart. Since Mrs. Wheeler was born on July 20, 1875, our man deduced 1910 as the year of his birth. It

could well have been, though, almost convincing had that deduction been drawn to the other side of 1875; Jim's speech pattern could have verified the "guess" as being true... "Oh, yes, John Brown headed east from Kansas to kick up some dust around Harpers Ferry, as best I can remember"!

Jim's memory was truly astonishing. He would think about his article for days, weeks, or months and, when he felt the need to write one, would sit at one of his typewriters and pound out "copy." The results, other than his editor's advice, would be a "one-shot deal."

He submitted articles to music magazines as a teenager and eventually wrote bits for Variety, one piece for Life in 1958 (as best I can recall) and was a proponent of A.S.C.A.P. in that society's fledgling years. As for the Hobbies installments, he wrote monthly from January, 1942 through May, 1985, save for maybe three or so issues. In all, forty-three years as a monthly columnist in a prestigious periodical is certainly not a bad record! He had an excellent vocabulary and used it well.

As for formal education, Jim went through high school though did not attend college. His father died when Jim was fairly young, and he took care of his mother until her death (I think in the late '50s). The elder Walsh was an insurance salesman and, for a time, Jim followed in his father's footsteps but abandoned that career because he disliked selling to those who couldn't "afford, need or want" such a commodity. In due respect, I truly believe that salesmen are born, not "made," since my father sold insurance policies from 1932 - 1978 and was a highly respected man in his business...otherwise he wouldn't have survived that long in the profession!

Getting back to our subject, Allen Debus reminded me that Variety had, for a time, published anniversary issues yearly and that Jim had contributed much to the 1953 "annual," which possessed the green cover as it appeared issue per issue in the early 20th century. He would often use noms de plume, but one could recognize the style.

In addition to collecting and researching records and writing biographies of early recording artists, "brother" Jim enjoyed stereoscopic cards, typewriters of the past, cats and Charles Dickens' works, as well as research on Dickens. An avid reader, he especially took pleasure in "Americana," including passingly popular fads, thereby becoming some sort of an anthropologist.

In summing up, I can only hope that young collectors will try to find all issues of Hobbies in which Jim Walsh is represented and read them in chronological order, if possible, to discover the development of his style, and find "additions and corrections" which he labored hard and long to compile in his search to do full justice to his subjects, as would the proverbial "good king."

P.S. The Roanoke C. Health Department and Camelot Nursing Home in Salem, Va. could not disclose the cause of death over the phone, but I will report this information in the next issue.

Noteworthy is the fact that Jim's kid brother Chad Walsh also became a most influential writer in his own right. An Episcopal priest, Dr. Walsh has written much about C. S. Lewis, as well as philosophical books and stories which catered to young and old alike.

David Milefsky can be reached at Rt. 1, Box 48-A, Boyce, VA 22620.

SOME POST-PRODUCTION BLUE AMBEROLS

Gilbert F. Pasley

A few years ago, I bought a group of cylinder records which included a series of Blue Amberols created for dictation practice and recorded at 150 grooves per inch for the Ediphone.

The period of production of this series was unknown until recently when, upon re-reading George Frow's The Edison Disc Phonographs, I noticed footnote #12 on page 93 which says:

"Two recording sessions of interest are noted at the studio in Columbia Street later in 1929 [later, that is, than October 28th when commercial record production ceased.] December 23/24 Blue Amberol wax masters made for the Ediphone account:

No.301 A&B Courtesy in Business, spoken by
W. F. Daly
No.302 A&B Loyalty in Business, " " "
No.303 A&B Courage of Youth, " " "

I wondered if there was any relationship between this series and those in my collection, since the titles were the same but the speaker was not. I then checked the matrix numbers and found that both the matrix numbers (1) and the titles matched those listed by Frow.

The records in this series known to have been pressed are:

Record Matrix No.	No.	Title	Speaker
1.	*	Courtesy in Business	Edward J. McNamara
3.	303	The Courage of Youth	Edward J. McNamara
4.	304	Teamwork in Business	Edward J. McNamara
5.	*	Initiative in Business	Edward J. McNamara
6.	310	Famous Men of History- Alexander The Great	Edward J. McNamara
8.	308	Developing Personality	Edward J. McNamara
9.	309	Planning Your Life	Edward J. McNamara
11.	311	The Right of the People to Rule	Edward J. McNamara
12.	307	Doing One Thing Well	Edward J. McNamara
13.	313	Famous Men of History-Galileo	Edward J. McNamara
17.	317	Famous Men of History- Abraham Lincoln	Edward J. McNamara
18.	318	Address by Calvin Coolidge	Calvin Coolidge

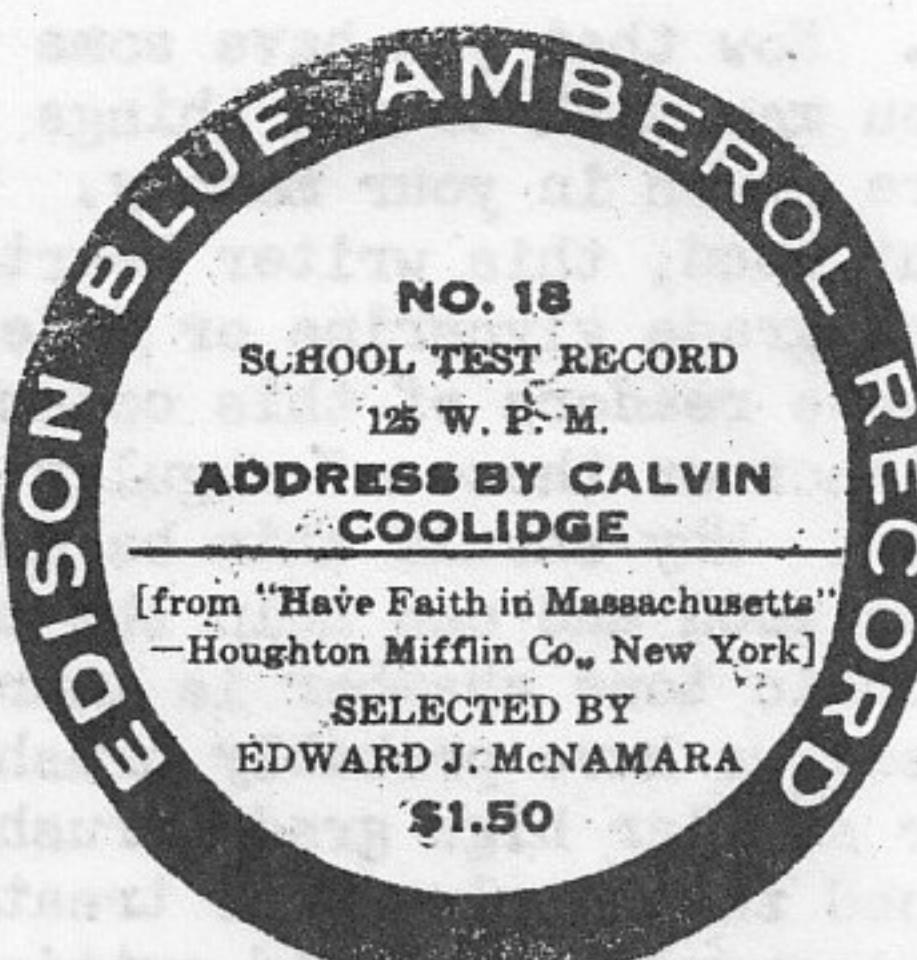
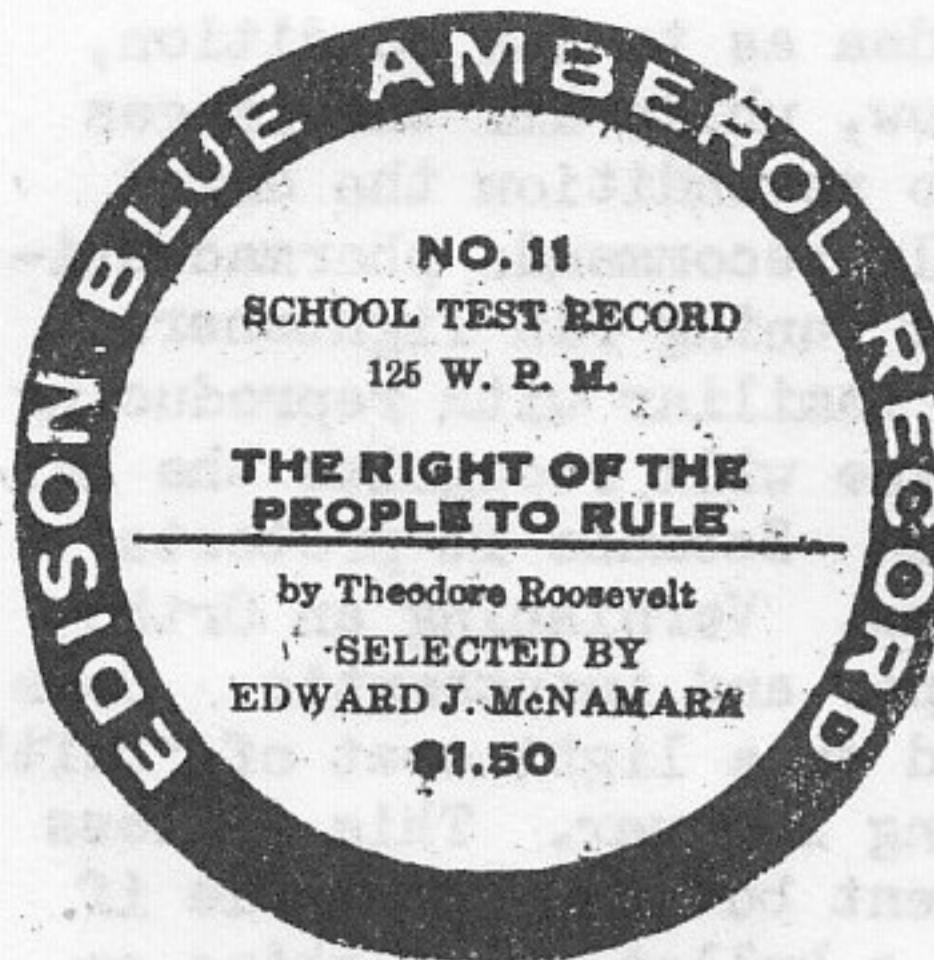
(1) (*) means no matrix number visible

The reason for the change of speakers from W.F.Daly to E.J.McNamara has not been explained.

The records of particular interest are No. 11 and No. 18. The lid of No. 11 says "No. 11, School Test Record, 125 w.p.m., The Right of the People to Rule by Theodore Roosevelt, selected by Edward J. McNamara, \$1.50." The corresponding record rim title is "11, The Right of the People to Rule, Edw. J. McNamara 125 w.p.m."

In contrast, the lid of No. 18 says "No. 18, School Test Record, 125 w.p.m., Address by Calvin Coolidge [from "Have Faith in Massachusetts" - Houghton Mifflin Co., New York], Selected by Edward J. McNamara, \$1.50." The

corresponding record rim title in "18, Faith in Massachusetts, Calvin Coolidge, 125 w.p.m."



A hearing comparison of the two records reveals different voices, reinforcing my belief that record No. 18 is indeed an actual live recording of Coolidge's voice.

If anyone has additional information on titles in this series, please contact the writer at: (213) 822-8764 or write G. F. Pasley, 8828 Pershing Drive #142, Playa del Rey, CA 90291.

NOTE

Before Transcribing Wipe Records Clean

Form 8305—Printed in U. S. A.

Record slip packed in each box

(cont. from p. 6.)

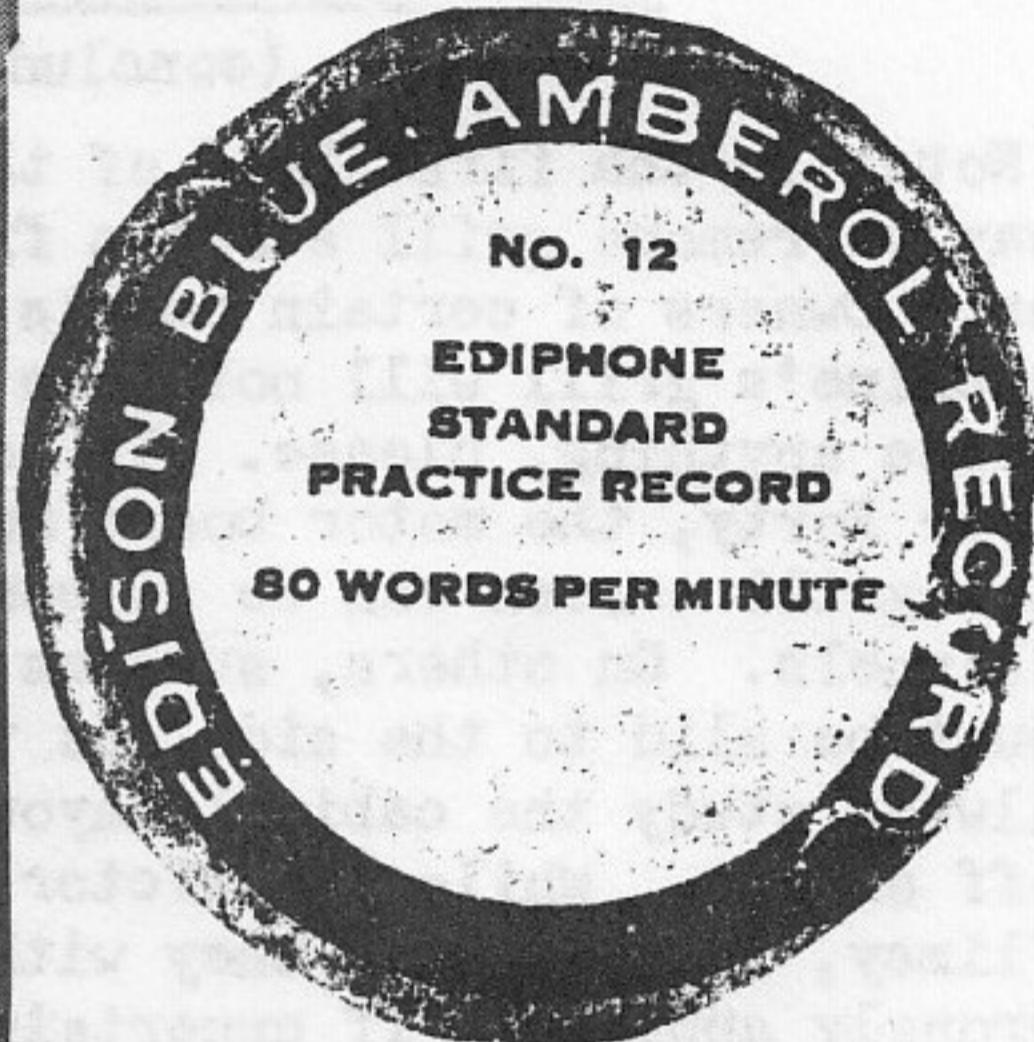
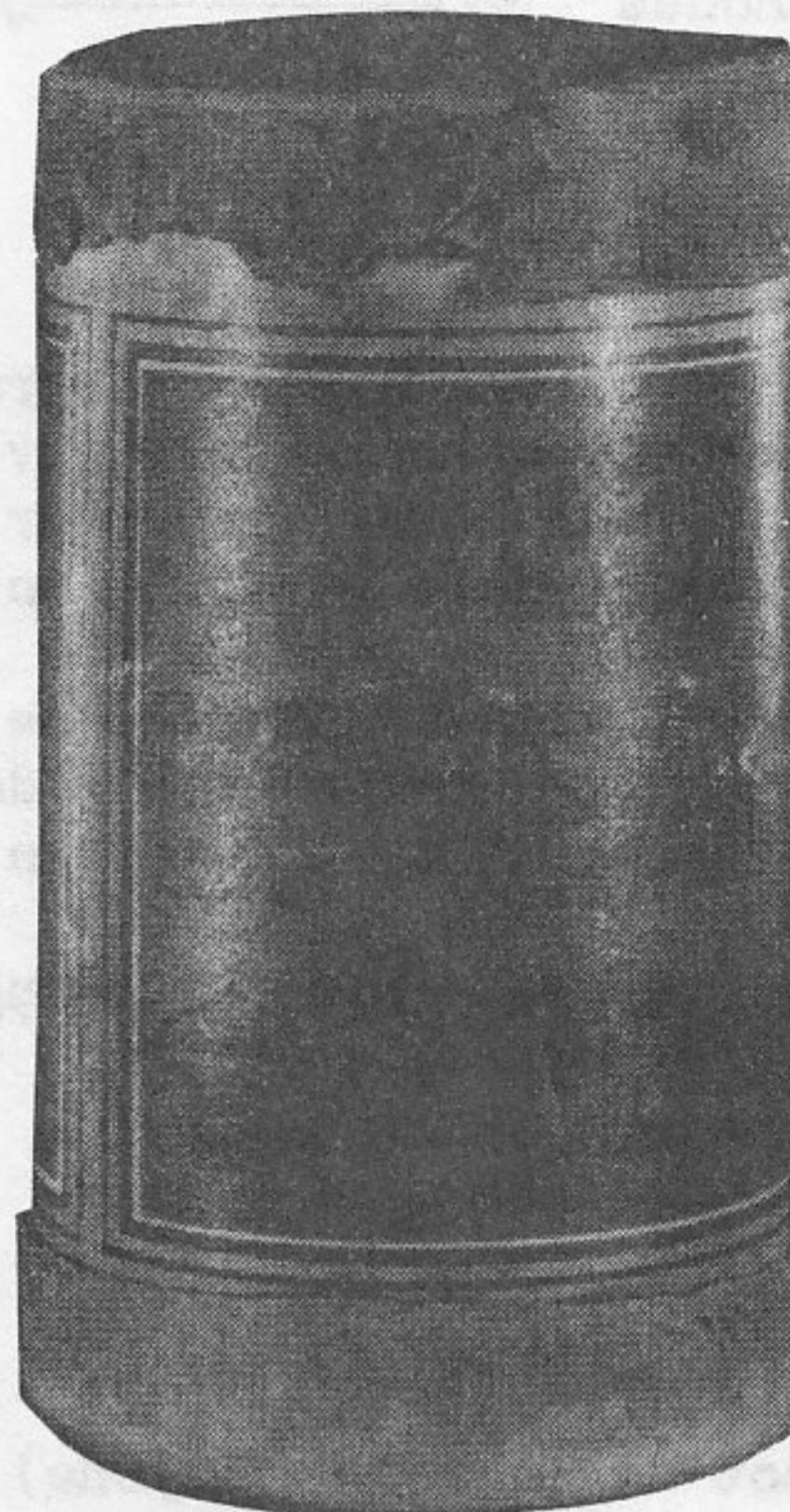
facts relating to Murray's career during the year covered and gives recording dates. I am not sure of his source and will not attempt to determine if these are correct. With his dedication to the project, I'm sure he located the best information possible. The spoken information was recorded at different times. Mr. Doulou's diction is excellent, though some might feel his voice a bit harsh. But, this is a project based on admiration and Mr. Doulou should be admired for his efforts to complete it.

There have been various attempts to produce a Billy Murray discography (though one is in process by collector Barbara Prosser), and Billy's friend Jim Walsh never got to write the Murray biography he was meant to. This series of tapes is the most accessible means to get to know and preserve the career of probably the pioneer recording artist of all time. I hope collectors will support this effort and recommend to your local library that they buy the full set, so that the name of Billy Murray will become more well known.

The Billy Murray Musical Biography, 32 volumes, is available at the rate of any 4 tapes for \$20.00, postpaid, from the producer: John Doulou, 6302 Woodland Blvd., Pinellas Park, FL 34665. (review from Steve Ramm, Philadelphia, PA)

Addendum

It would appear that these records were sold well into the 1930s. As unlikely as it seems, there were evidently label variations, as illustrated by the lid from Kirk Bauer's collection below.

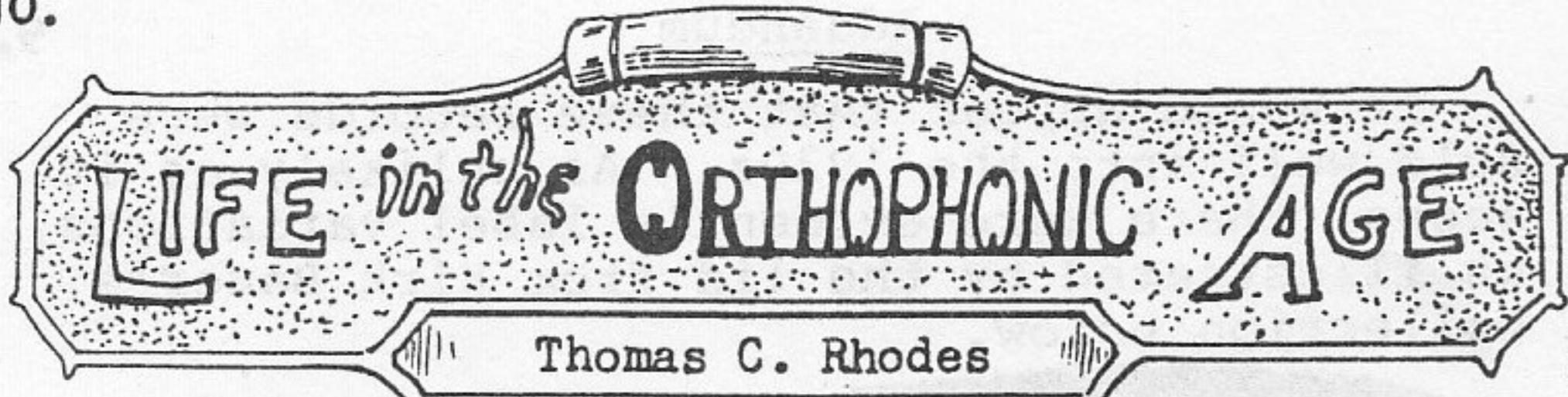


At first glance the boxes appear identical to those used for commercial Blue Amberols of the late 1920s. Indeed, the labels are the same and bear the same form number. However, the boxes themselves are slightly larger in diameter than their predecessors because they are cotton lined! The other difference is that a pressed cap was used on the bottom as well, unlike the earlier version.

The records examined look like ordinary Blue Amberols, except that the plaster core is smooth, not ribbed. They are recorded at 80 rpm and with 150 grooves per inch, so playing them on any standard cylinder phonograph will prove frustrating!

Buyers: Beware!

A few issues ago we carried an ad which included, among other items, a number of Bettini cylinder boxes without lids. While we don't question the sincerity of the advertiser, it is now known that these boxes were bogus — nothing more than disguised Edison Gold Moulded boxes! It is an unfortunate fact of life that as our hobby grows, as prices rise, and as desirable items become less available, certain unscrupulous individuals will take unfair advantage of the situation, not to mention the innocent buyer. As another example, we recently heard of a Florida welder who was hired to replace the word "Singer" on a treadle apparatus with the name "Edison," to make it look like an authentic treadle-powered phonograph base. While we cannot screen the items offered for sale in our pages, we would like to think that all our advertisers are honest and would offer a complete refund if they sell something which is later learned to be counterfeit.



Collecting Orthophonics - Part V
(concluded)

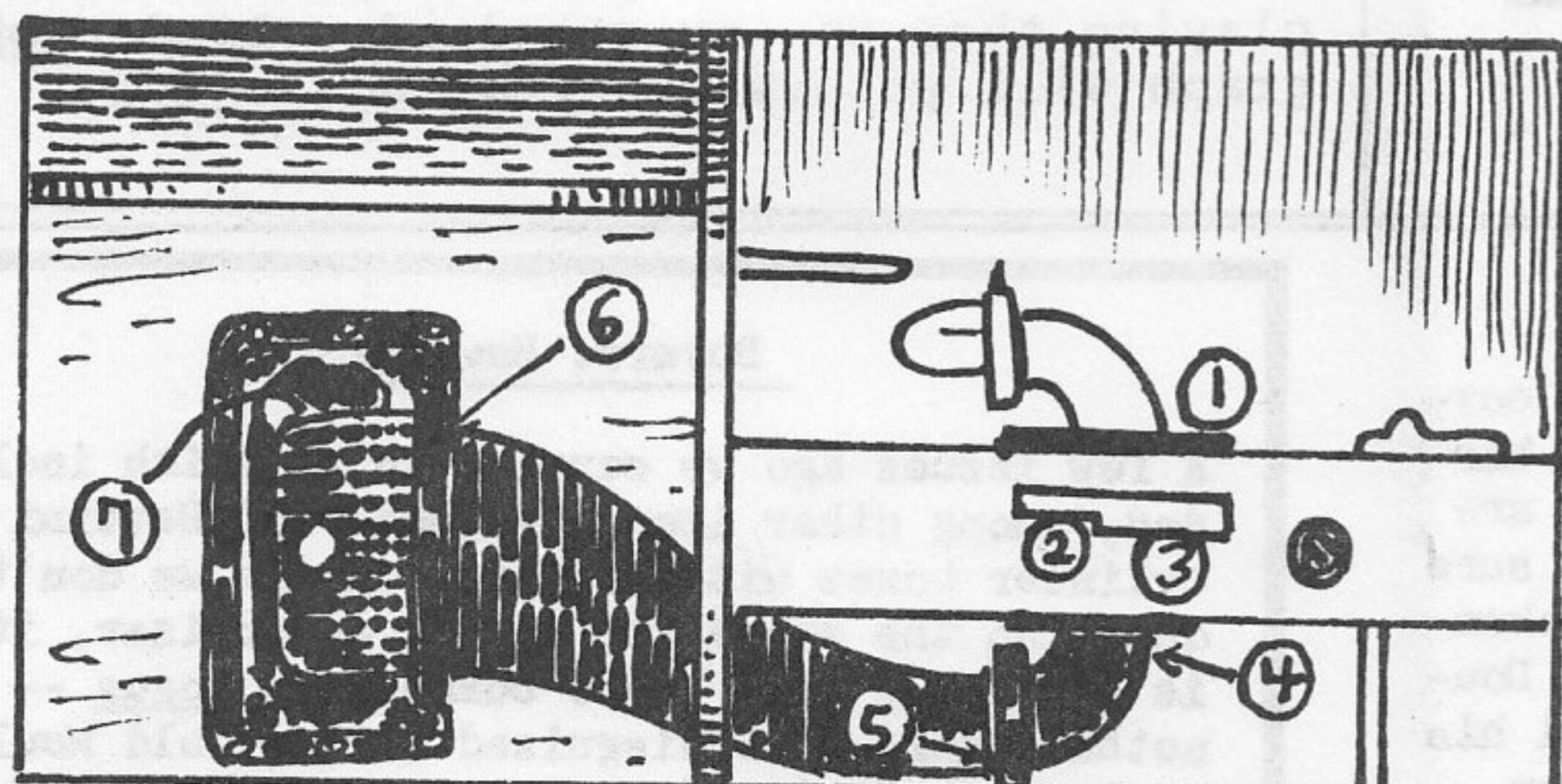
(Note: In the first half of this column, a very general way to remove grill screens from Orthophonics was given. Owners of certain models, please beware, as your machine's grill will not come off in this way. Do not force anything, please. In some models, such as the Four Forty, the motor board must be lifted out before the grill screen can be slipped up and out of the side channels. On others, such as the Granada, the screen must be slid to the side and then gently pulled out. Always study the cabinet layout before taking anything off or out. While the Victor grill screens are not flimsy, neither will they withstand any hard force wrongly applied. If uncertain, please leave things alone. No procedure is worth ruining the Victrola part. - T.C.R.)

6. The final test (which cannot be done by everyone) involves the vacuum. Open the lid, remove the taper tube and bracket (which will be the subject of a future column) and place the nozzle down the throat. With medium or low suction, turn on the vacuum. Making sure nothing will slip, go back into the tone chamber. The absence of any discernible air travel means blockage. If you have a sounding tube, you may use it to find specific leaks at this time. If your nozzle

won't fit, please disregard this test; getting something stuck is a superb way to high blood pressure and bad language.

7. Now that you have some idea as to its condition, you may wish to fix things now, while all the images are fresh in your memory. To recondition the dried out wood, this writer heartily recommends pharmaceutical grade glycerine or Hale's Tuning Pin Tightener. Those readers of this column familiar with reproducing pianos or those of regular type will recognize the latter. Why should this be done? Because it protects the wood and can help the tone. Varnishing an Orthophonic tone chamber is improper and inauthentic. Some readers have probably brushed on a light coat of "Deft" or similar high grade brushing lacquer. This is less good than a glycerine treatment but is acceptable if not overdone. Avoid putting a bullet-proof shine on the speaker; it may reduce frictional loss but it also tends to make periodic distortion more noticeable. Do not apply the glycerine or Hale's with wild abandon, as both these substances cause some swelling and uncontrolled swelling can create as many gaps as it closes. One does not wish to introduce any more stress factors.

8. For sealing seam gaps and the elbow, New England readers may use good old Rutland Roofing cement. If unavailable, Lexonite will do. For readers in other parts of the country, any high grade roofing cement of the black, medium-heavy viscosity type can be used. Not only is it authentic but it will last the rest of your natural life. Most of these tar-like products contain small amounts of asbestos: use with care in a well ventilated area. If you cannot use anything like this, you can employ other things, as long as they do not dry out and get crumbly after a short time. Don't just dab it on here and there; seal the entire seam



ORTHOPHONIC MODEL
TEN FIFTY

Seven places to seal exclusive of soundbox, crook arm, taper tube and wooden tone passage. Leakage at any of these flanges or gaskets will hurt deeper tone output.

Taper tube bearing & pivot assembly very hard to keep sealed.

both on the inside and out. Take the time to do a neat, orderly job; quality work cannot be rushed.

9. If the elbow was taken out, it may be remounted, after a very thorough checking, cleaning and sealing of the tone chamber's insertion point (a bit of lacquer can be brushed or sprayed into the heart opening before insertion). Seal all contact areas with roofing cement or equivalent; be generous but not sloppy. After all these steps, please give the Orthophonic at least a week to set. The fumes from lacquer and sealer are unpleasant anyway. Do not under any circumstances attempt to put back the grill or rear panel immediately after completing the sealing job. Always wait. Do not replace the tone arm assembly either, as cement fumes rise through the elbow. After a week or so, one can re-assemble the machine and finally be certain that any subsequent tonal deficiencies are lurking in the taper tube and reproducer. One can now guess the subjects of the next two columns. Isn't that wonderful?

This columnist would again like to thank all of his readers for their wonderful photos and letters. Remember, the field of Orthophonic research is still wide open. Every useful little bit helps to make the big picture.

Many thanks to my young friend Richard Trahan of Bellingham, Massachusetts, who must be given substantial credit for parts of the procedure given here.

(Note: This present series of "Collecting Orthophonics" is given for primarily educational reasons. Under no circumstances are the procedures given in these columns to be attempted by those unfamiliar with basic mechanical skills and Victrola construction. If at all uncertain or unsure, please refer to a qualified and experienced phonograph or talking machine restorer. Nothing is more costly than having wrongly fixed work redone. - T.C.R.)

HERE & THERE

From Past Issues

In issue #52 (Spring, 1985), Frederick Williams' "Eugene Ormandy Meets the Dorsey Brothers (A Guide to Ormandy's Early Recordings, 1923-1930)" mentioned one known 78 RPM transcription made for the Judson Radio Program Co., circa early-mid 1930. Since then, he has located six more, presumably all made by Columbia on a personal recording basis in 1930. All are by Eugene Ormandy and His Salon Orchestra:

- #481 - Gypsy Rondo (Xylophone Solo) (Haydn) 2:55 min.
- 487 - Southern Rhapsody (Hosmer) 4:35 minutes
- 653 - March "Pomp and Circumstance" (Elgar) 2:20 min.
- 664 - March from "Tannhauser" (Wagner) 4:10 minutes
- 850 - Poupee Valsanti (Poldini) 1:55 minutes
- 854 - Hungarian Dance, No. 2 (Brahms) 2:50 minutes

More Victrolac! In our issue #73 we told you of a standard Victor 78 from 1932 pressed in Victor's vinyl known as "Victrolac." Last issue we had a few more reported. And now another has surfaced! It's #1559, "Song of Faith" (parts 1 & 2) by the Chicago a Capella

Choir, a 10" scroll label Red Seal from 1932 (there were two additional parts, so presumably #1560 can also be found in vinyl). We urge our readers to check their records for additional Victrolac 78s from this period. Remember that they bear ordinary Victor labels, but the surfaces have the characteristic oily-filmy feel of Victrolac. And although the pressings are of standard thickness, they are slightly lighter than shellac pressings -- and are also a bit more flexible!

On this subject, Richard Hayes tells us he has a vinyl non-breakable blue wax copy of Columbia 18000-D, one of Columbia's 10" "Longer Playing" discs introduced in 1932. Being blue, this is a somewhat later pressing than the original issue, but we wonder if our readers know of any other vinyl pressings from Columbia.

Once in awhile a very thin shellac record turns up. At first look, these discs appear to be vinyl because they are somewhat flexible. We have seen a very thin Columbia from 1914, and an Aeolian-Vocalion and a Regal from the early 1920s. We caution our readers against going on a flexing binge, as too much force will obviously break these shellac records. Indeed, too much pressure can also break a Victrolac vinyl pressing!

Steamed Nipper (issue #74). Ira Duetgen thinks he has identified the dog used on the radiator cap in R. J. Wakeman's article, with the aid of some information from the Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand's Phonographic Record. The metal dog itself was apparently manufactured by the Reif Manufacturing Co. of Philadelphia. The dogs seen were quite early, as their bases were threaded to replace the screw-down discs on early (pre-1905) Victor turntables. Evidently once these screw-down turntables were discontinued, the Reif people cleverly adapted their dogs to other uses.

Recently Received:

Michael Payer has put an interesting concept into production under the business name Definitive Transfers. First he had the circa 1913 group picture of Victor's 25 "Great Singers of the World" (the one found in early copies of the Victor Book of the Opera and other promotional material) printed as a poster on antique ivory. He then set about to produce a cassette tape of all artists pictured, in the same order as they appear in the photo (left to right, Caruso to Melba). One can sit back, look at the group picture, and almost see each of the artists step forward a bit to sing his or her aria. The recordings used include the rarer selections made by some of the artists pictured. For more information about "The Great Singers of the World," write: Difinitive Transfers, 550 Franklin Avenue, Suite B-6, Hartford, CT 06114.

An Apology

We promised some of you that another group of reprints of our back issues would be ready this past fall. Although production has begun, we were unable to complete the set as promised, and we hope to have them ready before issue #76! Thanks for your patience.

6

readers failed to receive the last issue because they neglected to send their change of address!

AD LIB:

A look at "commercial" recordings
from the first half of the century

- by Kurt Nauck

Victor, Columbia, Marsh-Autograph, Okeh, Gennett: virtually every major phonograph record company offered special production services to outside concerns. Usually the client was a commercial establishment, but universities, politicians, religious organizations and private individuals also used the recording medium to accomplish their purposes. The one thing that all of these varied interests had in common was the fact that they each had something to sell. Last issue we inaugurated this column with the Marsh-Autograph Packard record. This time we will consider the first of two Columbia advertising records.

It is an undeniable fact that Columbia was a company that wanted to be everything to everybody. In the early part of this century, Columbia was the only American company to engage in both disc as well as cylinder technology. Their phonograph line included "typical" models as well as machines hidden in desks, tables and piano-shaped cabinets. Columbia also manufactured machines and records for other phonograph companies. Their extensive record catalog included large ethnic and international sections in addition to the more run-of-the-mill material. So it shouldn't be surprising that Columbia would have aggressively pursued the advertising and vanity record market.

I have selected the following record to transcribe because of its interesting content, and it's a real hoot. Mr. Fred speaks with a deep southern accent and is obviously quite nervous as he delivers his message. He pauses frequently, stutters, and has an almost apologetic tone in his voice. However, in spite of his oratorical deficiencies, he does convey a rather charming sense of sincerity.

This record is numbered in the "P" series, P standing for Personal; in fact, the label says "Personal Record" at the top. Columbia is mentioned only in small type at the bottom. In addition to advertising records, the P series also included musical selections from Broadway shows which were given away or sold in theater lobbies and were numbered in the 1000 series. (The most common example of this is 1001-P with two selections from "The Desert Song.") Other artists found in the P series are the Princeton Triangle Club Jazz Band and the C. & M. A. Gospel Quintette.

The next installment of this column will feature the Brach's Candy advertising record on Columbia 117-P.

The Hummingbird Hosiery Mills Advertising Record

Personal Record 101-P, Mx. #170272/170275

Side one: T. Walter Fred, President: A Personal Message to Hummingbird Salesgirls

This is Walter Fred talking, President of the Hummingbird Hosiery Mills, makers of full fashion silk hosiery. I've always had a great

desire to meet everyone of you Hummingbird sales girls personally. I wanted to tell you how much we appreciate your friendship and your loyalty to Hummingbird. You know it's impossible for me to get around to see all of you personally because there's so many thousands of you scattered in practically every city and town in the United States. That's why I'm talking to you on this record. I want to give you a very cordial invitation to visit the Hummingbird Mills at Chattanooga. I want you to meet the other members of our organization. You'll find that we have plenty of time to see you and show you about and you're always welcome. I want you to see the class of people who make Hummingbird hose. They're white folks, just like you and I; clean cut, intelligent, and they have the real pride of craftsmanship in their work. By the way, there's a motto we have around the mill that I think is one reason why Hummingbird has made so many million friends. Now I think this motto is awfully good and its a good guide for all of us in anything we do in life. It is this: "Nothing in life is really worthwhile but the best." Applied to silk hosiery, it means Hummingbird hose must be the best in their price range. Now, I'd like to get this over to you too. Hummingbird now means full fashion silk hosiery. You know we used to make only (Cetranet)? or seamless silk hosiery under the trademark Hummingbird. But last year we built a beautiful new full fashion mill, one of the largest, finest in America. And applying this old motto; same motto, we put in the finest machinery, we buy in Japan only the finest grades of silk and, uh, all the way through it's just the last word.

Now, if you're getting tired of listening to me talk, won't you just turn this record over and play the other side. You'll hear a beautiful piece of music played by my old friend Bernie Cummins, now playing at the Biltmore Hotel, New York City. It-it's old music, and new music too. The old piece, "Little Gypsy Sweetheart", reminds you of moonlight night on Lookout Mountain, soft music, so forth. Now I'm-I wa-want make this very plain: I'm not trying to sell you anything; you've already shown that you're our friends and we have more business at the mill than we can take care of. But I want to impress this on you, that we appreciate very much everything you've done for us. And if you like this record, won't you sit down and drop me a line, just address it to Walter Fred, care of Hummingbird Hosiery Mills, Chattanooga, Tennessee. Good-bye.

Side two: The Hummingbird Orch.: Sam, the Old Accordion Man (Evidently there must have been a change in plans, because the band does not play Little Gypsy Sweetheart! It is a good band, however, and probably is Bernie Cummins.)

I would be very interested to hear from any readers about other advertising records in the Columbia P series. Also, I am earnestly seeking information you might have regarding Durium recordings (other than the standard Hit-of-the-Week records). If you have any Durium records, any size, foreign or domestic, please contact me with the specifics. I had planned on covering Duriums in this issue, but I found so much unpublished material that I decided to see if I could gather enough to do a short discography. I am also planning research on Talk-O-Photo, Talking Book Co. "shaped" kiddie records and Flexo/New Flexo. All help will be appreciated!

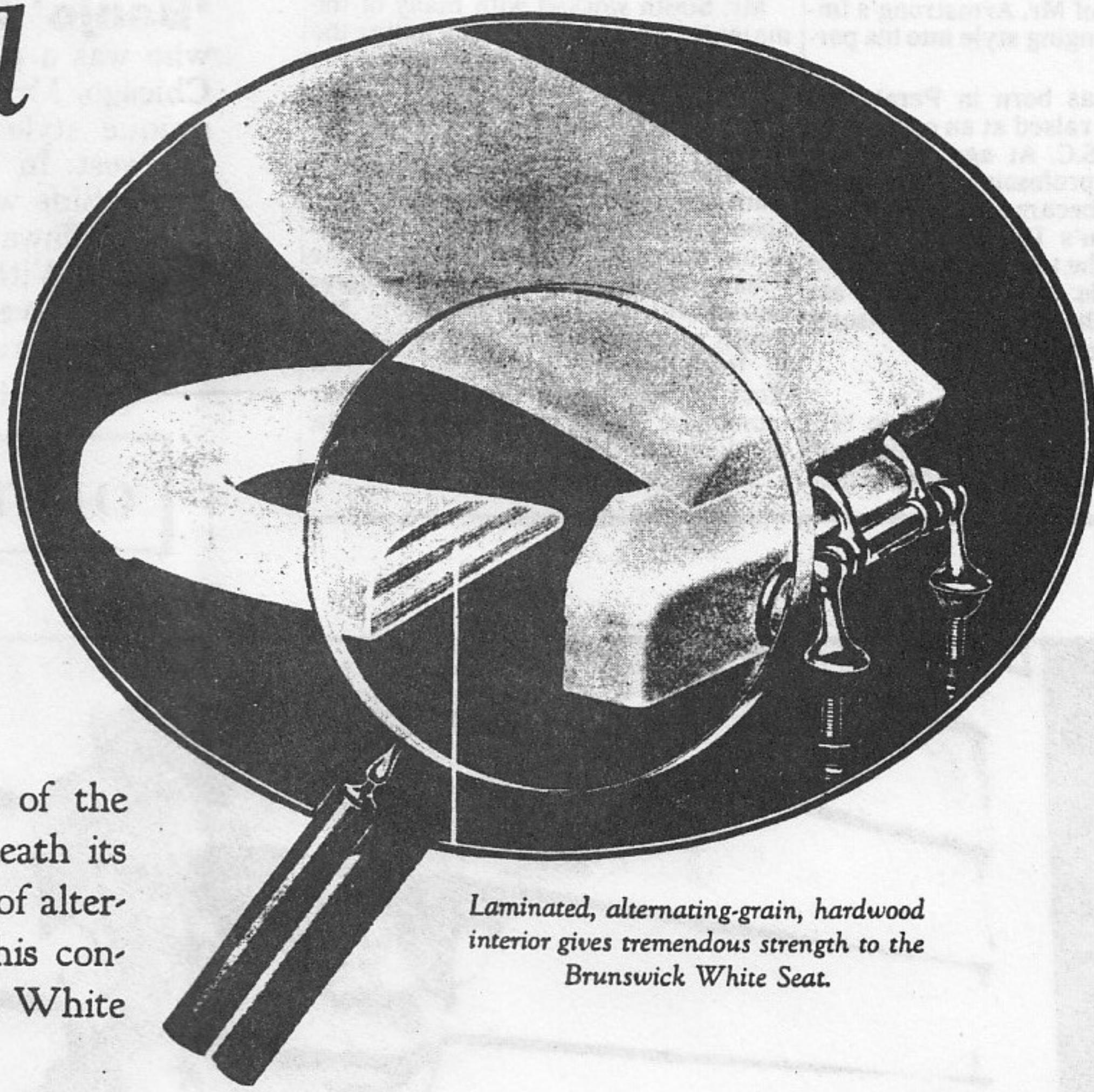
Kurt & Diane Nauck
1940 E. Allegro
Houston, TX 77080
(713) 468-3472

Curiosity Or ner

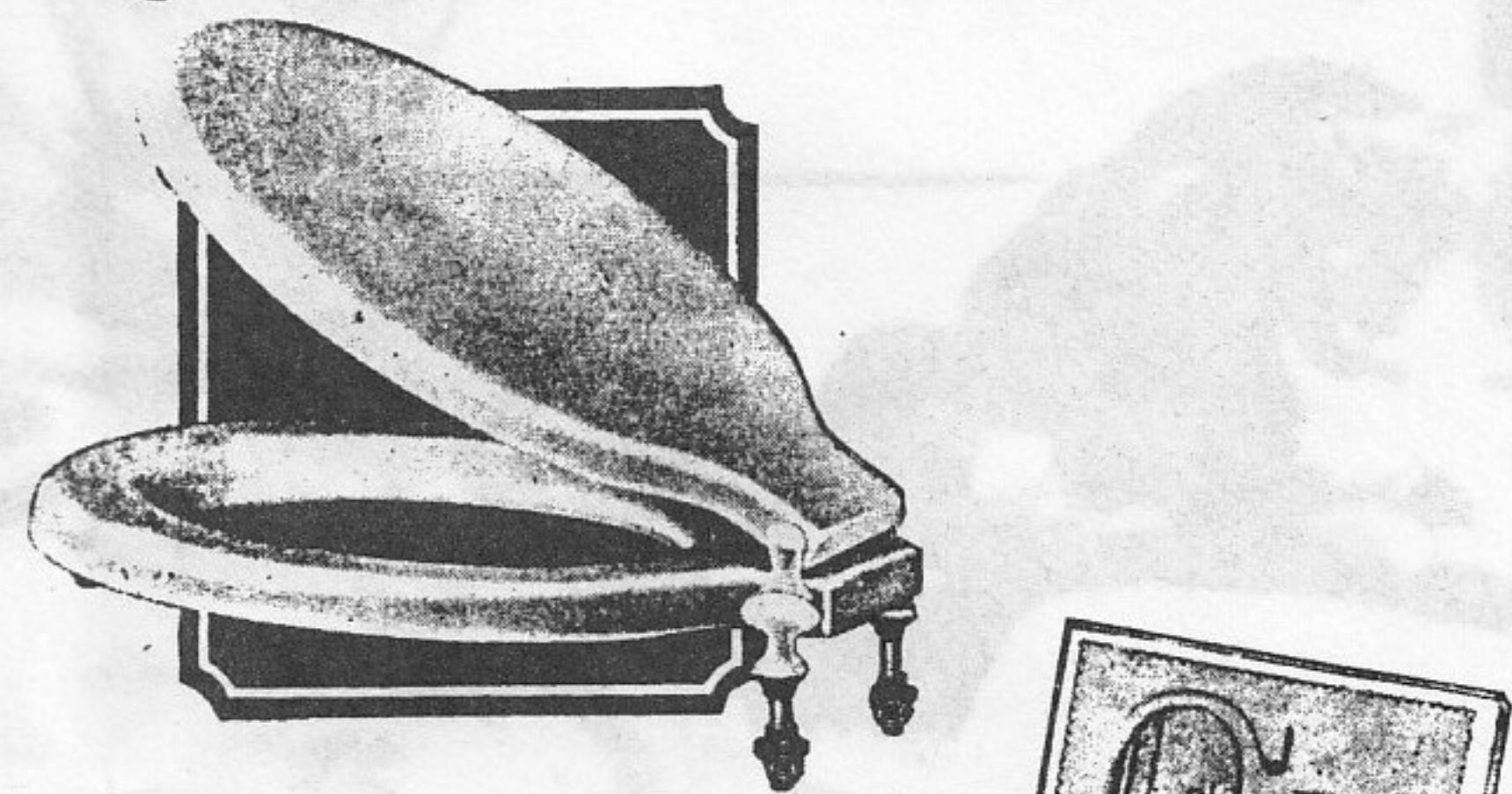
"For Brunswick Collectors Only!"

Record and phonograph collectors do not need to be reminded that the Brunswick-Balke-Collender Co. manufactured other products as well. Certainly we are all familiar with Brunswick bowling and billiard equipment. But did you know that they also had a line of toilet seats? The following ad comes from the American Builder magazine for August, 1928. We can't help wonder if toilet seat collectors prize their late 20s Brunswicks the way some record collectors do!

This new Brunswick White Seat Helps Sell Your House



Laminated, alternating-grain, hardwood interior gives tremendous strength to the Brunswick White Seat.



Booklet FREE

Write for illustrated booklet telling you more about this finest of white seats. Use the convenient coupon.

FILL IN, CLIP AND MAIL



Dept. 275, Seat Division

THE BRUNSWICK-BALKE-COLLENDER CO.
623 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago

Send booklet showing the Brunswick White Seat.

Name.....

Street.....

City..... State.....

The Brunswick White Seat

By the makers of the famous
Whale-bone-ite Seat

Jabbo Smith, 82, Trumpeter, Dies; Called Rival to Louis Armstrong

By PETER WATROUS

The trumpeter Cladys (Jabbo) Smith died on Wednesday at St. Vincent's Hospital in Manhattan. He was 82 years old.

He died of complications from pneumonia, Lorraine Gordon, a friend, said.

At the peak of his career, from the mid-1920's through the 30's, Mr. Smith — an exciting, aggressive player who cultivated his own idiosyncratic style — was considered a rival of Louis Armstrong. Later in his career he incorporated elements of Mr. Armstrong's improvising and singing style into his performances.

Mr. Smith was born in Pembroke, Ga., in 1908 and raised at an orphanage in Charleston, S.C. At age 16 he was working as a professional musician, and at 17 he became a member of Charlie Johnson's Paradise Band. In 1928, he joined the touring revue "Keep Shufflin,'" while recording with Fats Waller and with James P. Johnson's Louisiana Sugar Babes.

Competing Discs

Mr. Smith moved to Chicago in 1929 and began recording with a five-man group for the Brunswick label, which

was trying to compete with Louis Armstrong's highly popular records.

Brunswick had reason to think he might be able to compete successfully. Rex Stewart, the cornetist with the Duke Ellington Orchestra, remembered a musical showdown between Mr. Smith and Armstrong at the Rockland Palace in Harlem in which Mr. Smith more than held his own. "He was blowing — really coming on like the angel Gabriel himself," Stewart told an interviewer.

Mr. Smith worked with many of the major bands of the 1930's, including the orchestras of Carroll Dickerson, Earl Hines, Erskine Tate, Charlie Elgar, Tiny Parham, Fess Williams and Claude Hopkins.

In the 1950's, he more or less retired from music, and worked in a car rental agency. But in 1979, he joined the cast of the musical "One Mo' Time" at the Village Gate in Manhattan, and later toured with it. During the 1980's, Mr. Smith worked in Europe, in clubs and at festivals, and performed in New York at the Village Vanguard with the trumpeter Don Cherry and with the Mel Lewis Orchestra.

There are no survivors.

Frankie Masters, 86, a Chicago band leader for more than five decades, died in Barrington. Mr. Masters and his orchestra played most of the city's major hotels, including the Boulevard Room in the Conrad Hilton and the Palmer House. In the 1940s, his band performed in New York. While at the Grill Room of the Roosevelt Hotel, he shared the bandstand with Guy Lombardo. Mr. Masters got his start in college with a small band. At the time, Chicago was the home of 40 theaters with their own orchestras, so he came here to further his career. He joined Benny Krueger's orchestra at the Tivoli Theater on the South Side and later succeeded Krueger as leader.



Side and later succeeded Krueger as leader.

'Banjo' Ikey Robinson, 86, a banjo and guitar player who was a pioneer in Chicago's jazz scene in the 1920s, died in Chicago. Mr. Robinson, a native of Virginia, began displaying his unique style of solo-picking banjo in clubs in the South and Midwest. In 1926 he came to Chicago and played mostly on the South Side with various small combos and such giants of jazz as Cab Callaway, Jelly Roll Morton, Erskine Tate and Sammy Stewart. With jazz on the upswing, Mr. Robinson shifted to New York. He eventually returned to Chicago, where he continued to play with groups until he became ill last year.

OBITUARIES



Jim Walsh looks over some correspondence with his cat watching on in a photo which appeared in *The Messenger* in 1977.

Vinton's writer-in-residence dies at 80

Vinton resident Ulysses "Jim" Walsh, one of the world's foremost authorities on pioneering recording artists' lives and early phonograph history, died Dec. 24 at the age of 80. Walsh was living at Camelot Nursing Home in Salem at the time of his death.

Walsh, who was named as Vinton's writer-in-residence in November 1979 by Vinton Town Council, was known worldwide for his knowledge of early recording history. His authority on the subject earned him an elite spot among the few named to "Who's Who in the World" in 1977.

Having written a column for *Hobbies Magazine* for some four decades, Walsh had quite a following. His encyclopedic knowledge of songs, recordings, artists and the details of early recordings made his articles valuable as references. His talent as a writer made them enjoyable to read.

Walsh was a retired newspaperman, having worked for *The Roanoke Times*. He also worked for WSLR-Radio. While living in his historical old home atop Vinton's Maple Street, he could tap his collection of old recordings to listen to a 1916 rendition of Billy Murray's "Are You From Dixie" being played on an Edison phonograph or any of the other 40,000 discs in his collection.

Walsh was also a noted Charles Dickens Scholar.

In 1979 he donated his collection to the United States Library of Congress, which had a special spot waiting for it in its annex. At the time, the collection was conservatively estimated to be worth \$250,000.

In an article shortly before the

collection was picked up, Walsh noted, "I'm going to break down and cry like a child when they (the recordings) go out. It's going to be a terrific shock, but still something I feel is for the best."

His collection of 80s (80 revolutions per minute) discs, phonographs, wall posters and photographs or recording artists dated back to 1892. They were to be stored in a special Jim Walsh section with his pictures and catalogs. Walsh received correspondence from all over the world about his collection.

Walsh, called eccentric by some, was not apologetic for his way of life. "I am what I am. I've never tried to pattern myself after anyone else," he said in a 1979 story in *The Messenger*. For years he lived alone with several cats in his Vinton home.

A native of Richmond, Walsh wrote for a number of other hobby magazines in addition to *Hobbies*. His works also appeared in *The New Yorker*.

On donating his prized collection instead of selling it, Walsh had said, "I have a streak of idealism. I want to preserve my efforts for posterity. I'm a person with my own clearly defined attitudes."

He continued, "I never set out to own a collection which is supposed to make me the world's foremost authority on pioneering recording artists' lives and early phonograph history. And I'm not a publicity seeker."

"I just love what I've collected and hope the rest of the world will, too."

Walsh had been ill for several years. A memorial service was scheduled to be held at Camelot Nursing Home earlier this week.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 1991

Eddie Barefield, 81; Played Saxophone In Major Big Bands

Eddie Barefield, a saxophonist and clarinetist who played with virtually every major big band, died on Jan. 3 at Mount Sinai Hospital. He was 81 years old and lived in New York City.

He died of a heart attack, his wife, Consuela, said.

Mr. Barefield's first major big-band experience, with the Bennie Moten orchestra of 1932 (which later metamorphosed into the Count Basie Orchestra), led to work with Zach Whyte's band. In the course of a 60-year career in big bands, he also performed with McKinney's Cotton Pickers, Cab Calloway, Les Hite, Fletcher Henderson, Don Redman, Benny Carter and Duke Ellington.

Conducting on Broadway

In addition to working with bands, Mr. Barefield was a staff musician for ABC and WOR radio. He also conducted Broadway pit orchestras for nearly 20 years, spent 10 years in the band of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus and composed and arranged for Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, Paul Whiteman and Jimmy Dorsey.

He was a regular soloist in groups around New York City, playing with Sammy Price, Wilbur De Paris and the Harlem Blues and Jazz Band. He also found time to appear in films, including Al Jolson's "Swinging Kid," Louis Armstrong's "Every Day's a Holiday" and "The Night They Raided Minsky's."

Though Mr. Barefield was a fine soloist on both saxophone and clarinet, one of his contributions to jazz was his ability to blend his full, rich tone into the saxophone section of an orchestra.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by a daughter, Patricia Poindexter of Teaneck, N.J.

Notes on the Obituaries

Just as we went to press with the fall issue we learned of the death of bandleader Xavier Cugat at the age of 90. "Cugie," of course, is best remembered for popularizing Latin American dance rhythms in the U.S. Record collectors will be interested to know, however, that he recorded a number of sides as violinist with Vincent Lopez for Okeh as early as 1925, and later for Brunswick.

Frankie Masters had an orchestra which recorded for Victor in 1927 & 1928, but he then didn't visit commercial recording studios for another eleven years.

Jabbo Smith's earliest documented recording was with Perry Bradford's Georgia Strutters in May, 1927 for Columbia's Harmony label. He can also be heard with the Louisiana Sugar Babes on various sides for Victor.

Ikey Robinson was first heard on record with Richard M. Jones on Victor; he, too, made it to Columbia's budget labels with the Hokum Trio in 1930.

It is more than an unusual coincidence that Robinson appeared on the first records issued under Jabbo Smith's name (Brunswick, January 1929) -- and the same month Smith played with Robinson's first band for the same label!

Eddie Barfield played with Cab Calloway and made several sides for the ARC group of labels a full six months prior to his joining the Bennie Moten Orchestra.



The Philadelphia Inquirer / VICKI VALERIO

Guests and other inductees applaud as Arthur "The Street Singer" Tracy finishes his acceptance speech.

On a happier note, we show a picture of Arthur Tracy after his induction in the Philadelphia Music Foundation's Hall of Fame at the fourth annual awards this past December 4th. Tracy, best known for his theme song "Marta (Rambling Rose of the Wildwood)," made his first recordings for Victor in July of 1931. (courtesy of Steve Ramm)



(Do you have yours yet? See advertising section!)

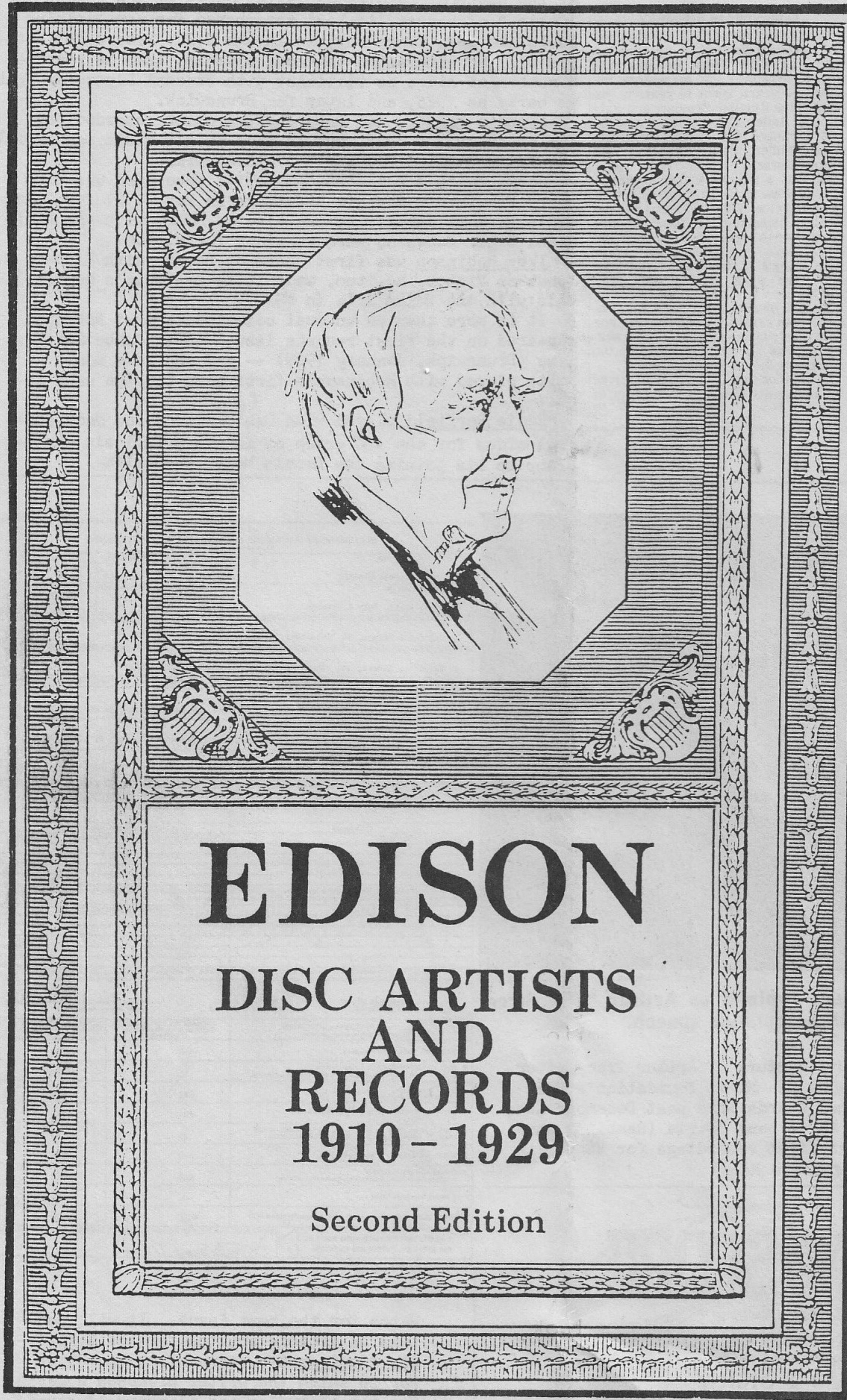
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PS Form 3526, Dec. 1985

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Watch for the next issue. It will contain an article written for the Scientific American two years after the Civil War in which the writer proposes a device for the recording and playback of sound! Such a device -- still hypothetical -- was called a "phonograph"!

Edison Disc Artists and Records, 1910-1929



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